

FROM THE ARCHIVES: IT'S ALL IN A NAME

By Amy Chellino

Historically, Joliet Junior College has been a symbol of personal growth, education and opportunity in our region. While the college has gone through many changes since its creation in 1901, the name has remained the same despite attempts to change it over the years.

As explained by historian and professor emeritus Robert Sterling in his book *Joliet Junior College: A Pictorial History of America's Oldest Public Community College*, as the JJC district grew to encompass nearby towns, a group of students requested the name be changed to reflect the various communities in the district in the late 1960s. There were several possibilities for a new name: Five Rivers, Joliet Dresden, Louis Joliet, Pioneer, J. Stanley Brown and Joliet Community College. A petition was circulated that 'Joliet' remain in the name and 3,382 signatures were collected. Board president William Glasscock wanted the name to remain unchanged, and at a January 12, 1970 board meeting, he stated, "When Junior grows up and has gray hair, the neighbors still call him Junior." A motion was passed to keep the name as Joliet Junior College.

In the 1980s and 1990s, other attempts were made to change Joliet Junior College's name. At the time, many junior colleges were dropping the 'junior' or replacing it with 'community'. In 1987, a logo was designed that highlighted 'Joliet' and 'College' but diminished the 'junior' part of the name by decreasing the size. In a *Blazer* article from October, 17, 1995, Professor Dale Layman launched a campaign to change the name to either Joliet College or Joliet Pioneer College stating that the word junior was "demeaning and derogatory." However, the consensus proved that the change in name would not influence enrollment and a poll of students and faculty showed that the name Joliet Junior College was a reflection of the purpose of the school and its history and, essentially, a name that holds honor because of all it stands for.

The college is proud of its heritage and the Joliet Junior College name is part of the history that brought it from being housed in Joliet Township High School to the state of the art, green campus we are privileged to experience today. We all have a story about how Joliet Junior College became a part of our personal histories. Whether attending JJC due to proximity, for the degree or certificate offerings, or for the strong academic foundation and transfer resources available to students looking to continue on to a four-year institution, Joliet Junior College holds an important place in our lives, region, state and country, and serves as a prominent reminder of progress and success. As the first junior college, JJC has given opportunities to thousands of people and created a population of intelligent, skilled and service minded citizens. The name Joliet Junior College is a part of a history we are all privileged to be connected to.

1936



1941



1950



1958



1964



1987



Joliet "Pioneer" College?

David Weese
Editor

Professor Dale P. Layman believes that JJC should change its name to either Joliet College or Joliet Pioneer College. In an interview with the *Blazer*, Layman stated that the word junior is "demeaning and derogatory. Even community as in "community college" he thinks is demeaning.

"I'm for the un-juniorization of all Junior Colleges" Layman

of a Junior. - A Call For Ending "Junior" and "Community College" Labels in the United States. Our other sister schools have dishonored us; stabbed us in the back if you will. They say that since we were the first Junior College in the nation, we should keep our name. It was to their advantage to change their names, and they did, leaving us alone with a title out of the environment of the fifties. We are no longer in that era. They've turned us from

research on this matter," Layman said. In his paper *What's In A Name, A Conceptual Overview*, Layman explores the etymology of the word junior, stating that the word junior takes its root from the Latin word juvenis, which means young or youthful, which is also is where the word juvenile comes from. Layman also mentioned a secondary definition of the word junior, which means "lower position, rank or standing." He notes that the word

subordinate."

Therefore, Layman states in his paper, the word junior is roughly equivalent to the word juvenile, which is roughly equivalent to the word inferior. "... we can infer that junior = juvenile = inferior in the left brain. This verbal sequence in turn triggers the right brain to conjure an image of subordinate, somewhat inferior little boy. In my right brain, I keep seeing an image of a chubby, freckle-faced little kid. He is dressed like Little

Spanky in Our G wearing a beanie on top! Further, gooey red lollipop

"... What do y imagination? W that you would n junior image as suitable for colle Layman also paper, "I feel I another reason JUCO, may be objectionable. nickname, JUC unfamiliar with

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